

Downham Rural District Council.



ANNUAL

REPORT



OF THE

Medical Officer of Health


FOR THE

Year ending 31st December, 1913.



GEO. FREDK. CROSS, M.B., B.S.,

Fellow Royal Institute Public Health.



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DOWNHAM MARKET,

April 3rd, 1914.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE DOWNHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in presenting you with my Eighteenth Annual Report of the Sanitary Condition and of the work done in the District during the past year.

The general health of the District has been well maintained. Whilst the death rate is lower the birth rate remains about the same as in the preceding three years. Infantile mortality, however, remains high.

The District has been fairly free from notifiable infectious diseases, with the exception of Enteric Fever. The number of cases of this disease are again more numerous than is desirable. On the other hand cases of Diphtheria have of late been very rare.

The Inspection of Housing is steadily progressing. The Report on the Parish of Magdalen is included, and your Inspector has just completed the inspection of St. Germans. The District being a large one the work is necessarily slow, but, as the reports will show, the Inspection is thorough. This report also deals with the Housing problem, and it is satisfactory to be able to say that you are fully aware of the necessity of providing better houses for the working classes, and that you intend to exercise your powers in this direction. I feel sure that by so doing you are going straight to the root of all the evils caused by overcrowding, immorality, intemperance and neglected homes and children; and that you will also strike a deadly blow at Tuberculosis.

My thanks are due to your Council for recognising the extra work that I have been called upon to do in connection with the Tuberculosis Regulations of 1913, and also to the generous support you have always given me in carrying out my duties.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GEO. FREDK. CROSS, M.B., B.S.

PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The Downham Rural District is situated in South-West Norfolk, and comprises an area of 81,930 acres. There are 34 parishes which are divided into three sub-districts, viz. : Downham, Wiggenhall and Fincham. The river Ouse runs through the district, dividing the fenland from the upland.

There are no factories or any trades particularly injurious to health. The work is chiefly agricultural, and in the fen, especially in the Wiggenhall district, Market Gardening is now the chief occupation, and each year more land is being put to this purpose. A large number of hands are employed and attract workers from outside the district. Consequently there will be an increasing demand for houses in these districts. There appears to be only one firm attempting to house their workers, they having in one village upwards of 20, and in another seven houses. If others would follow this example it would help to solve the housing question in these districts.

Number of Medical Orders given	...	...	66
„ Midwifery	„	...	4
„ Persons sent to Hospital	...	...	20
For treatment of Eyes	...	...	8
„ Throat	...	...	2
„ Consumption	...	...	4
„ Enteric Fever	...	...	1
„ Tonsillitis	...	...	1
„ Accident	...	...	4

Average number of inmates of Union Workhouse during 1913, 80; 1912, 75; 1911, 70.

POPULATION.

The population of the district according to the census of 1911 was 15,527, and estimated to the middle of 1913 is 15,650.

The number of inhabited houses is 3,750, giving an average number of persons per house of 4.14.

WATER SUPPLY.

The total rainfall for the year was 20.73 inches. The supply of water varies in different parts of the district. Where the Marham water passes through the district the supply is plentiful and good. Other parts have to depend upon shallow surface wells, rain water stored in tanks or cisterns, and in some parts

the water from the river Ouse is used. This water can never be considered satisfactory owing to the fact that a considerable amount of sewage matter is allowed to be poured in. It is further rendered unfit for drinking purposes owing to the enormous amount of weeds which, being cut higher up and outside the district, gradually find their way down to the lower reaches and are held up there and at certain times of the year become very offensive. Considerable improvement could be made in the condition of the water if these weeds were periodically removed, and also if the growing weeds in that part of the river which goes through this district, from Southery to Denver Sluice, could be cut and passed through the Sluice Gates. This matter has been repeatedly brought to your notice and yet nothing has been done, chiefly because it is difficult to ascertain whose duty it is, or who has the right to do this work.

The pollution of the river Ouse by the sewage from Ely and Littleport has not yet been abated. Acting upon your instructions your Inspector and myself, in August, visited the sewage outfall at Ely and found that crude sewage was still being poured into the river. At Littleport untreated sewage was discharged into a drain which ultimately is pumped into the river at the Ten-Mile Bank pumping engine.

At Crimplesham the water supply is unsatisfactory. In the village street there are several wells but in only two of these is the water considered fit to drink. If the people could be induced to take the water a good supply could be obtained, as the main of the Wisbech Water Works Company passes through the parish. There are some 30 houses, together with the school (which has no water supply) which could be connected up.

During the year I have analysed 33 samples of water from various parts of the district.

At Hilgay I found a well seriously polluted. This was partly due to the negligence of one of the tenants and upon whom several notices had been served. I submitted a sample of this water to the County Analyst, who confirmed my analyses, and the well has been closed.

At Southery 84 houses were without a water supply and orders were given for the provision of tanks. In only 22 cases has this been complied with. In nine cases arrangements were made for obtaining a supply, leaving 51 notices outstanding.

In the District :—

New Wells sunk	...	...	...	...	2
Well linings raised and new covers fixed	...				8
Underground tanks (rain-water) repaired	...				3
Rain-water cisterns provided	...	...			24
Houses connected to Marham water main					7
Water Certificates granted	...	...	...		22

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

At Hilgay, in Holt's Lane, a new length of 6-inch sewer, measuring 140 yards, was laid and 12 houses connected.

At Fincham a dyke in the main road was piped. 160 feet of 15-inch earthenware socketed pipes were used.

The sewers at Fincham, Magdalen, Shouldham and Stoke Ferry have been cleaned out.

At Denver, complaints having been received as to the condition of the sewer, your Inspector was asked to make a special report.

REPORT UPON THE SEWER AT DENVER.

Presented 22nd August, 1913.

Forty-three years ago a surface drain, consisting of 8-inch (diameter) agricultural tiles, was laid from a point about 75 yards north of the Post Office to an open dyke opposite Kent's Row.

In this length are five openings for surface water, each fitted with a bell-trap (an obsolete type of trap). It appears that the main object of those in authority from the time that the drain was laid was "to prevent house drains being connected." This, however, has been futile. In this length there are nine connections (draining 18 houses) the most recent connection being the cause of this report.

Locally there is an idea prevalent that a sewer is "one which receives one or more water closets," *i.e.*, to constitute a sewer there must be one or more water closets connected.

A sewer is "one which receives the drainage of two or more buildings belonging to different owners."

Additional lengths of sewer have been constructed. Some 25 years ago a line of 12-inch (diameter) glazed socked pipes was laid. The first continuous length now measures (approximately) 677 yards, consisting of agricultural tiles, bricked sewer, and glazed pipes. This discharges into an open dyke (opposite West Hall Farm) 44 yards in length, it then becomes a covered sewer, continues down Sluice Road for a distance of (approximately) 451 yards, and discharges through a settling tank into a shallow dyke on the Common just below the Mill.

The sewage passes through a cesspool just before it reaches the settling tank; from this cesspool the occupier at the Mill draws sewage (by means of a pump) and utilizes it for cooling an engine.

The dyke, which receives the effluent strikes across the Common, makes a circuit and returns lower down to the side of the road, continues along the road side, and discharges into the St. John's Eau.

Total length of sewer (approximately) 1,172 yards. There are 16 road gratings and 24 connections (draining 44 houses).

In addition there are two short lengths of surface drain measuring (approximately) 62 yards, in which lengths are four openings.

Since the last connection was made to the sewer, complaints have been received "of the stench arising through the road grates."

As previously mentioned, bell traps are obsolete, being practically useless for preventing sewer emanations, the water-seal being very shallow.

To remedy the nuisance now existing it will be necessary to provide and fix trapped (earthenware) street gullies to replace the existing bell traps and open gullies.

Six gullies should be fixed without delay (cost complete and fixed about £2 each), and a ventilating shaft should be fixed at the head of the sewer.

After the report six street gullies were fixed to replace the untrapped gullies, and a 4-inch ventilating shaft erected at the head of the sewer. This work has abated the nuisance complained of. A further letter was received in September, stating that although the nuisance was abated at the top of the village, it was transferred to the lower part where the sewer crosses the Common. Your Inspector and myself have on several occasions visited this but have been unable to find any nuisance.

DRAINAGE TO DWELLING HOUSES.

Drains examined	...	...	108
„ found defective	...	...	22
„ rendered satisfactory			17

MATERIALS USED.

38 yards of 6-inch glazed pipe.
157 „ 4 „ „
36 trapped gullies.
5 new sinks.
4 cesspools constructed.
2 new urinals erected.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

New privies erected	24
Privies repaired	29
Accumulations removed	9
Ash-pits or dust-bins provided	5

SCAVENGING.

There is a public scavenger in the villages of Downham West, Fincham and Hilgay, and the work has been done satisfactorily.

At Southery a row of four cottages, which formerly had a very disgusting ash-bin, have now been provided with galvanised iron dust-bins. On making a visit here, to my astonishment, I found these receptacles full of clean rain water. The tenants said it was no use putting the refuse in the bins as they had nowhere to empty them.

SCHOOLS.

The Medical Inspector of the children in the 26 public elementary schools is under the supervision of the County Medical Officer of Health, who is also the School Medical Officer. There has been a considerable amount of work in connection with the schools, entailing a good deal of correspondence with the School Medical Officer and the Head Teachers. All cases reported to me have been promptly investigated.

The following schools were closed for Measles, Chicken Pox, or Whooping Cough:—Southery, Holme, Hilgay, St. Germans, Stow Bridge, Salter's Lode, Wretton and Wereham.

The new school at Ten Mile Bank, Hilgay, now in course of erection, at a cost of £2,678, is nearing completion.

The contract for the New Infants' School at Magdalen has been signed.

At Watlington School there is a ditch at the back of the premises which requires attention.

The schools at Crimplesham and Wormegay have no water supply. In both cases it would be possible to have the Marham water.

I think the attention of the Educational Authorities might well be drawn to the enforced attendance of the younger

children, more especially those under seven years of age. Some of these have to walk a considerable distance. At certain periods of the year the fen drives are in a very bad condition, and at times are almost impassible. Yet these poor little mites have to tramp perhaps two or three miles to get to school. I know of cases where they start before it is daylight and return when it is almost dark. They probably have had but a hurried and scanty breakfast, their boots have seldom been dried, and if they are, they are so damp and hard that they are difficult to get on. There is often no provision made when at school for drying the boots. I have been told that on their return they are often too tired to eat. Can it be wondered that we find so many children suffering from tuberculosis, adenoids, rheumatism, anæmia and other debilating diseases ?

MILK SUPPLY.

Regulations with respect to Dairies and Cow Sheds have been in force in the district since 1905.

There are now 17 registered premises, three having been registered during the year and one having left the district.

New cow sheds have been constructed at West Dereham and Magdalen.

Four dairies send milk outside the district and seven sell milk locally.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number on register ...	...	...	...	31
„ of inspections ...	...	...	...	191
„ of carcases examined ...	...	...	...	403
„ of notices to lime-wash ...	...	...	...	5
(All complied with).				

Three slaughter houses have been closed owing to the occupiers discontinuing business.

One carcase of mutton found to be diseased was surrendered and destroyed.

HOUSING.

I have little to add to the remarks made on this question in previous reports. The conditions existing in the various villages reported upon are well set out in your Inspector's reports.

Sufficient evidence may be gathered from these as to the need for more cottages and especially for such as are suitable for the larger families. This will be found to be so in a much greater degree in the Fen district, where work is abundant and wages are good.

In compiling the following Table I have used some of the figures given me by the Overseers who also expressed their views as to the need for new cottages in their respective villages. It will be seen that the number unoccupied, with the exception of Marham, is small. Many of the cottages remain unoccupied because they are either too small for a labourer with a family or they are unfit for habitation.

TABLE A.

Parish.	Families of Separate Occu- piers.	Population 1911.	Number of houses above Cottage rental.	Number of houses at cott- ages rental £6, or less.	Number of Cottages un- occupied.	Is there a demand for New Cottages.
Bardon Bendish	98	419	14	84		Yes.
Bexwell	15	77	5	9		No.
Boughton	53	210	11	45		No.
Crimplisham ..	60	231	12	48	0	Yes.
Denver	192	731	20	143	4	No.
Dereham West	122	442	29	95	5	No.
Downham West	104	420	45	60	3	Yes.
Fincham	172	627	43	150	7	Yes.
Fordham	44	215	7	38	0	No.
Hilgay	358	1590	16	281	4	Yes.
Holme	51	223	10	44		Yes.
Marham	160	643	38	120	23	No.
Roxham	10	55	3	6	0	No.
Runcton South ..	29	137	4	26		No.
Royston	9	27	2	6	0	No.
Shouldham	134	513	34	95	2	No.
Shouldham Thorpe.	58	255	10	49		No.
Southery	275	1171	64	214	2	Yes.
Stoke Ferry	162	652	48	111		Yes.
Stow Bardolph	303	1347	66	230	8	Yes.
Stradsett	29	118	7	22		Yes.
Tottenhill	76	288	21	55		No.
Wallington	11	57	4	6		No.
Watlington	140	548	48	93		No.
Welney	101	449	18	70		Yes.
Welney West ..	132	559	24	95	2	Yes.
Wereham	132	498	47	95	4	No.
Wiggenhall St. Germans	126	496	50	93	7	Yes.
,, St. Mary Mag.	182	761	53	135		Yes.
,, St. Marys ..	68	269	21	48		Yes.
,, St. Peters ..	43	216	13	35		Yes.
Wimbotsham ..	141	548	17	124	3	No.
Wormegay	89	391	19	70	6	No.
Wretton	82	344	21	63	2	No.

At Crimplesham there are no houses vacant. There are three houses which, unless considerably improved, will have to be condemned. In one of these houses a man, who has just recovered from a severe illness, has been given notice to leave. He is unable to obtain another house in the village.

At St. Germans there are seven unoccupied houses. Three of these are used for storing furniture, two are one-roomed houses, suitable only for an old person. This leaves only two available. Both of these are good houses, one being let at £8 and the other at £7 per year.

At Welney the houses are of a very inferior type, and there appears to be a need for more houses.

At the end of the year there were 93 notices outstanding. This is chiefly due to the fact that in most villages only one or two persons follow the trade of bricklayer, and, as most of the work is placed in their hands, the work is carried out in rotation, and consequently there is much delay.

NEW BUILDINGS.

The Building Bye-laws came into force on January 1st, 1913. During the year plans were approved for the following buildings :—

Houses, detached	8
Houses, semi-detached	8
House, shop and bake-house ...	1
Alterations & additions to houses	6
New Sunday school	1
Addition to reading room ...	1

All have been completed with the exception of—

Detached house,
House, shop and bake-house,
Addition to one house,
,, to reading room.

The number of inspections made during progress of the work was 106.

The following table shows that 16 new houses were erected during the year :—

TABLE B.—NEW HOUSES.

Parish.	Erected For.	No. of Rooms.		Whether Drains Provided.	Type of Closet.	Water Supply.
		Living	Sleeping			
*Denver	Mr. H. J. Smith ..	2	3	Yes.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—200 gals.
*Denver	Mr. H. J. Smith ..	2	3	Yes.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—200 gals.
Denver	Norfolk County Council ..	2	3	No.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—600 gals.
*Fordham	Mr. H. G. Martin ..	2	3	No.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—200 gals.
*Fordham	Mr. H. G. Martin ..	2	3	No.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—200 gals.
Hilgay	Mr. F. Brundle ..	2	3	No.	Privy	Rain-water cistern—750 gals.
Hilgay	Mr. E. H. Shackle ..	3	3	Yes.	Water	Rain-water cistern—300 gals.
*Hilgay	Drainage Commissioners ..	2	3	No.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—200 gals.
*Hilgay	Drainage Commissioners ..	2	3	No.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—200 gals.
*Marham	Mr. D. Melton ..	2	2	No.	Privy	Well fitted with pump
*Marham	Mr. D. Melton ..	2	2	No.	Privy	Well fitted with pump
Marham	Mr. S. Hicks ..	2	2	No.	Pail	Well fitted with pump
Stoke Ferry	Mr. E. G. Eggett ..	4	4	Yes.	Water	Well fitted with pump
Welney	Mr. J. Gascoyne ..	3	4	Yes.	Privy	Rain-water cistern—1000 gals.
Wiggenhall St. Germans ..	Mr. W. Elliott ..	3	3	Yes.	Privy	Tap from water main
Wiggenhall St. Mary	Norfolk County Council ..	2	3	No.	Pail	Rain-water cistern—600 gals.

* Pairs

TABLE C.

Number of dwelling-houses inspected	...	...	301
" " unfit	...	...	61
" of representations made (affecting 18 houses)			6
" of closing orders made	"	...	6
" remedied without closing order	...	...	43
" rendered fit after closing order	...	...	4

General character of defects found :—Walls dilapidated and damp, no spouting, roofs unsafe, ceilings bad, rooms low, floors uneven and below ground level, houses generally damp, badly lighted, windows often fixed, no place for storage of food, and no provision for the disposal of household refuse.

Houses inspected, routine work	...	...	112
" inspection of district	...	...	189
Total number of houses inspected	...	...	301
Houses and premises revisited	...	...	521
Appointments with Owners (or Agents)	...	...	82

HOUSES DEMOLISHED.

D. 83 was a house at Salter's Lode which had not been regularly occupied for several years. On the 5th October, 1912, a tramp family, seven in number, were found all sleeping in the downstairs room.

Action was taken, the family removed and a closing order made, followed by a demolition order. The latter not being complied with action was taken under Sec. 34 (1890).

Mm. 90. This was a four-roomed house at Marham, with a thatched roof. The bed rooms on section represented a triangle, one bed room being devoid of light or ventilation.

A new house has been erected on the site.

Mm. 123-124 were two houses at Marham. Two houses have been erected on the site.

Sg. 229-230 were two houses at Sedge Fen Drove, Southery, neither were occupied when the closing order was made.

Sg. 249-250 were two houses at Southery. The owner intends erecting a new house on the site.

Structural improvements to dwelling-houses	...	51
New wash houses	...	11
New roofs...	...	5
Roofs repaired	...	7

Houses spouted	37
Spouts refixed	5
New ceilings fixed	22
Ceilings repaired	19
New floors	33
Floors relaid	21
Floors ventilated	14
New window frames	110
Fixed frames made to open	10
Step ladders abolished	7
Staircases fixed	7
Pantries provided	22
Pantries ventilated	11
Rooms cleansed and lime-washed	26
Cases of overcrowding abated	10
Houses demolished	8
Discontinued as dwelling houses	4
New houses erected	16

OVERCROWDING.

Ten cases of overcrowding have been abated. Two families had to be dealt with twice, before the overcrowding was satisfactorily abated.

TABLE D.

Reference.	Number of Bed rooms.	Cubical Contents.	Inmates	Air space Per Head	Remarks.
E. 1	1	1218	7	174	Vacated houses.
E. 43	1	1176	7	168	„ „
E. 83	1	1274	6	212	„ „
E. 102	2	1417	10	141	„ „
E. 106	2	1425	9	158	Additional bedroom added.
E. 112	1	1269	7	180	Vacated house.
Mg. 50	1	1167	6	194	„ „
Mg. 123	2	1618	7	231	2 adults removed.
Sy. 12	1	1148	6	191	House closed.
Sy. 257	2	1299	7	185	4 adults and 1 child left.

REPORT UPON THE VILLAGE OF MAGDALEN.

Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen is a parish and village six miles North from Downham Market; the river Ouse forms the East boundary.

Area—4,233 acres of land, about three-quarters of which are fen, 21 acres of water, 32 acres of tidal water, and 17 acres of foreshore.

Soil—Clay (or fen).

Subsoil—Clay, with a little silt.

Altitudes—Ordnance Datum—Highest 12·5 (near the church).
Lowest 0·6 (Botany Bay.)

Occupation—Agriculture and Market gardening. Work is plentiful. The majority of the women work on the land, and earn good wages, more especially during the fruit-picking season.

HOUSES.

Number—Occupied	..	..	..	..	183	
Unoccupied	..	..	..	..	6	
					—	.. Total 189

Reference.	Living Rooms.	Bed Rooms.	Annual Rent.			Remarks.
			£	s.	d.	
Unoccupied—18	2	2	5	0	0	Furniture stored.
37	1	1	3	5	0	Condemned.
45	1	1	4	0	0	
61	2	2	—	—	—	Unfit.
87	1	1	3	0	0	
90	2	2	5	10	0	

By the above table it will be seen that one of the unoccupied houses is condemned, one unfit for occupation, two contain only one living room, and one bed room each, of the other two, one is used for storing furniture, and it is questionable whether the owner would let the remaining one. Practically no suitable houses are available.

The village proper is situated near to the river bank, lies between Lodes Head and the Church, and comprises 107 houses.

A closing order has been made in respect of five houses, two others are unfit for human habitation, of the remainder, whilst none are seriously defective, several cannot be regarded as satisfactory.

In one case the bed rooms, three in number, are so badly planned, that the tenant, his wife, and two children sleep in a down-stairs room.

In seven houses the approach to the bed rooms is by a step-ladder, in one case the opening in the bed-room floor measures only 25 inches by 31 inches, a full-sized bedstead cannot be passed through, and the tenants sleep down-stairs.

In 32 cases there are no washing coppers.

Rents—(per annum)	..	..	Under £4	..	..	14
			£4 to £5	..	..	86
			Over £5 to £6	..	..	35
			Over £6 to £16	..	..	46
			Over £16	..	..	7

The water rate is not included in the rents.

In 31 cases the rent is included in the wages. It will be seen that practically 53 per cent. of the houses are let at rents of £5 per year and under, and that 35 out of the remaining 89 do not exceed £6 per year, as the earnings of the inhabitants are greater in proportion to other villages in the district; higher house rents could be afforded.

Plan—	..	..	..	..	..	Detached.	..	..	82
						Semi-detached	..	..	64
						Rows of three	..	..	3
						„ four	..	..	6
						„ five	..	..	2

The above condition is most satisfactory, invariably when a house stands alone, the surroundings are kept clean, and sanitary, this applies also in lesser degree to semi-detached houses. Where houses are situated in rows, or blocks, more supervision is required, and the worst conditions generally obtain.

Construction—	..	..	..	..	..	Walls—Brick	..	..	..	178
						Brickwork (cemented)	..	..	..	3
						Carr stone and brick	..	..	..	3
						Flint and brick	..	..	..	3
						Wood	..	..	..	2

Owing to the absence of damp-proof courses, and to the porosity of the bricks, many of the houses are damp. The worst cases are being dealt with.

Roofs—Galvanized iron	..	..	..	1
Slates	..	..	..	75
Thatch	..	..	..	1
Tiles	..	..	..	112

The majority of the roofs are tiled, but the pitch is generally sufficient to render the roof weather-proof, and in few cases were leaky roofs met with.

Ground Floor—Bricked	..	..	..	118
One, or more boarded	..	..	..	71

Brick floors invariably show signs of dampness, and in addition are cold and dull to the touch, one floor at least should be boarded.

Position of Living Room Floors—Above ground level	78
Below ground level	111

Usually the lowness of the rooms will not allow of the floors being raised to the above ground level.

Ventilation—	..	..	..	..	Through	..	..	140
					Single (one door)	..	..	43
					Back-to-back	..	..	6

The proportion of through houses to single is very good, and will compare favourably to other districts.

In 15 houses there are no windows nor doors in the rear walls, these are in addition to the back-to-back houses. Where practicable through ventilation should be insisted upon.

123 houses are provided with fire-places in one or more bed rooms.

No fire-places in bed rooms 66

It is desirable that one bed room in every house should possess a fire-place, especially in time of illness. Not infrequently are bedsteads brought down-stairs, and the patient nursed in the living room on account of there being no fire-place in the bed room.

In a number of cases the bed room fire-places are papered over, but in case of illness they may soon be put into use.

Lighting—Defective in 12 houses.

Accommodation—	Living Rooms.				Bed Rooms.				
	1	..	..	1	..	..
			1	..	..	2	..	..	4
			2	..	..	2	..	..	75
			3	..	..	2	..	.	4
			2	..	..	3	..	..	31
			3	..	..	3	..	..	15
			With four or more bed rooms						40

In common with most villages the percentage of houses with two bed rooms is highest. 45 per cent. of the houses contain three or more bed rooms, which is most satisfactory. The percentage of houses with only one bed room is high, the capacity of the bed rooms in these 20 houses varies from 532 cubic feet (lowest) to 1736 cubic feet (highest), two cases of overcrowding were abated last year, and now none of these houses are overcrowded.

Occupants—					Inmates.				
	1	..	
							2	..	39
							3	..	29
							4	..	35
							5	..	27
							6	..	17
							7	..	15
							8	..	4
							9	..	4
							10	..	2

Average inmates per inhabited house 4.09.

More than seven Inmates—			Reference.		Inmates.		Bed Rooms.	
	..	..	1	..	9	..	6	
			2	..	8	..	6	
			5	..	9	..	4	
			21	..	8	..	3	
			122	..	8	..	2	
			137	..	9	..	5	
			164	..	10	..	2	
			165	..	9	..	3	
			171	..	10	..	3	
			179	..	8	..	3	

	Reference.	Bed Rooms.	Inmates.	Cubic ft. per head.
Overcrowding—	318	2	7	209
	122	2	8	192
	123	2	7	231
	148	2	7	235
	164	2	10	143

The above represents the actual overcrowding, *i.e.*, less than 300 cubic feet of air space per head, which is the figure generally accepted as a minimum.

Population—	Adults	577
	Children (under 10 years)	169
	Total	746
Food Storage—	Pantries (ventilated)	97
	„ (not ventilated)	15
	Food cupboards in living rooms	77

More than half the houses are provided with proper pantries, which is most satisfactory. Where the food storage is otherwise, every effort is made to persuade the owner to provide a pantry. 33 of the food cupboards are situated under the stairs, which is most unsatisfactory.

Water supply—	From public water main	121
	„ underground tanks	44
	„ galvanized iron cisterns	24

The Wisbech Waterworks Company some years ago laid a main through the village. There is a length of 2½ miles. Out of a possible 128 houses on the line of pipe, 121 are connected. The only other source for drinking water is the rain-fall. It is not possible to obtain drinking water by sinking wells, owing to the nature of the sub-soil.

Where the water is laid on to the houses, it is satisfactory to note that almost without exception, a rain-water cistern is also provided.

Drainage—	Baths	5
	Sinks	41
	Drains trapped	63
	„ untrapped	12
	„ cesspools	12
	„ to dykes	42
	„ to sewer	19
	„ no provision	97

On examination it was found that the cesspools and dykes were well kept, and it was only necessary in four cases to complain.

Sewerage—The sewer mentioned in the above table is situated on the South side of Church road, runs parallel to, but is some 30 yards back from the road. It is, at the commencement, an open sewer, receives 19 drains, which serve 23 houses.

The sewer runs by the back of the houses in Church road, it then merges into a pipe, runs under the main road, and discharges into a dyke, which leads down the Fen.

For several years this sewer has been a source of trouble, and cannot be regarded as satisfactory; probably at some future date some improvement will have to be devised.

Paving--	Yards paved	57
	Approach to back doors paved	110
	No paving	22

The above figures are most satisfactory.

Privy Accommodation-- .. .	Water closets	5
	Privies (vaults)	158
	„ (pails)	22

The Privies were found satisfactorily kept, there were but two cases of wilful neglect.

House Refuse—	Brick ash-pits— 23 (serve 33 houses).
	Dust-bins .. 6

Fifteen of the bricked ash-pits are not provided with covers, but only in one case was it necessary to complain. Most of the householders along the bank deposit their refuse on the foreshore. When it is thrown well down the bank there is no cause to complain, as the tide soon disperses any collections, but often through sheer laziness the refuse is deposited near the top of the bank and remains there, until a complaint is made.

Where there is no ash-pit, usually a heap is made on the garden, and in some cases holes are dug. The latter practice is always discouraged.

There was little cause for complaint as to the manner in which the refuse was dealt with.

Defects--	Structural	48
	Dirty houses	4
	Rain-water tanks defective ..	5
	Drains defective	18
	Privies „	23
	Insufficient privy accommodation	10
	Paving defective	10
	Houses not spouted	4

Steps are being taken to have the above rectified.

Your obedient Servant,

S. C. RIGG,

Downham Market,

Sanitary Inspector.

22nd August, 1913.

Your Council are anxious to do their utmost to improve the homes of the working classes, and have taken the greatest interest in all matters affecting this question.

After the report of the inspection of Magdalen, a Committee was appointed and an inquiry held in the village. The Committee was satisfied that there was a genuine demand for new houses, 14 applications having been received. On their report to your Council it was decided that eight new cottages should be erected. The Committee further reported upon a suitable site, and they were instructed to endeavour to purchase this, and negotiations are now being carried out.

The following work in this village has also been carried out:—

Summary of work done—

Notices served	109
„ complied with	75
Houses closed	5
Structural improvement	30
Houses spotted	4
„ cleansed	4
New pantries provided	11
Pantries ventilated	11
Houses connected to water main	3
Drains rendered satisfactory	8
Trapped gullies... ..	11
4-inch glazed drain pipe	55 yds.
New urinals	2
New privies	11
Privies repaired	5
Ash-pits constructed	3
Overcrowding abated	2
Step-ladders abolished	5
Staircases fixed	5
House discontinued as dwelling	1

WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES, &c.

A copy of the return forwarded to the Home Office is attached to this report.

Factories—

Brewery	1
Wheelwright and Wood Sawyer	1
Flour and Corn Millers	12
Total	14

Workshops—

Bakers	29
Blacksmiths	26
Carpenters and Builders	27
Cycle repairers	5
Dressmakers and Milliners	4
Plumbers	7
Saddlers	7
Shoe repairers	27
Tailors	4
Wheelwrights	14
Miscellaneous	8
Total	158

Number of Inspections—

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	90
Workshops	...	...	...	...	95
Number of defects found	...	...	...	...	2
" remedied	...	...	...	...	2
Notices to cleanse (all complied with)	...	...	...	...	6
Notices of occupation received from H.M. Inspector of Factories	...	...	...	...	3

NOTICES.

Public Health Act, 1875	...	...	...	...	161
" Water Act, 1878	...	...	...	...	89
Housing, Town Planning Act, 1909	...	...	...	...	52
Factories and Workshops Act, 1901	...	...	...	...	2
Verbal	...	...	...	...	62
Letter (Copy)	...	...	...	...	104
Statutory	...	...	...	...	69
Summonses	...	...	...	...	1
Convictions	...	...	...	...	1
Outstanding, 31st December, 1912	...	...	...	...	60
Complied with during the year	...	...	...	...	228
Outstanding, 31st December, 1913	...	...	...	...	93

CANAL BOATS ACT.

Boats inspected	...	...	...	...	22
" not registered	...	...	...	...	1
Certificates did not identify owner	...	...	...	...	2
Boats not lettered	...	...	...	...	2
Cabins required repainting	...	...	...	...	3
New certificates issued	...	...	...	...	3

PETROLEUM ACTS.

Number of Petrol stores	...	...	...	...	8
" Carbide stores	...	...	...	...	26
Inspections of above	...	...	...	...	48
Licences renewed	...	...	...	...	27
Licences lapsed	...	...	...	...	2
New licences granted	...	...	...	...	7

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.

Two specimens of sputum and four "swabs" from the throat were sent for bacteriological analysis.

In two of the cases of Enteric Fever blood was submitted for the Widal reaction. One of these was positive and the other negative.

One sample of water was sent to the County Analyst.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The total number of infectious diseases notified during the year was 46, and represents 34 infected premises.

SCARLET FEVER.

There were 17 cases of Scarlet Fever, mostly of a mild type, and calling for no comment. At Marham three cases occurred in one family. Although there were other children in the houses of the other cases they did not contract the disease. The case at Wormegay, however, at the end of the year infected several other children. The primary case was so slight that the boy until medically examined and notified was not confined to the house.

DIPHTHERIA.

Only one case was notified. The diagnosis of diphtheria was confirmed by a throat "swab." The case was isolated as far as possible, and no further cases occurred in the house. There is no doubt that the infection was contracted from a child who was staying in the house. This child came from London where he had had a bad throat, and when he arrived a nasal discharge. On his return shortly afterwards I learned that his sister had been sent to hospital suffering from diphtheria.

There were 18 cases of Enteric Fever notified. At Runcton Holme five cases occurred in the school house. There is little doubt that a polluted well caused this outbreak. A Chemical and Bacteriological examination demonstrated the presence of the *Bacillus Coli* (in 10 c. c.) and "pollution with sewage or animal excreta." The school was closed and the drains were exposed and found to be in a bad condition. These have been thoroughly overhauled and relaid and the well closed.

The first of the two cases at Welney was contracted outside the district, the patient coming home ill to be nursed. There were six cases at Southery. Two of these, in one house, drank the river water. Another case contracted the disease from a patient she was helping to nurse. This case was sent to the Lynn Hospital. In one case a Widal test taken was negative.

There is no isolation hospital in the district. A large tent with two beds is kept at the Union Workhouse for cases of Small Pox, but has never been used. It is still to be hoped that the County Council or other bodies interested will co-operate in providing some joint scheme of hospital isolation suitable for the needs of this and the adjoining districts. Failing this I think some scheme might be jointly arranged by your Council and the Urban District Council to provide isolation accommodation, not only for the two districts, but at the same time for the Union Workhouse. In my report for 1908 I alluded to this possibility.

ANTHRAX.

A case of Anthrax occurred on Christmas Day and the carcase was removed to a slaughter-house in the adjoining district before the diagnosis of the disease was complete.

The horse which dragged the cart in which the bullock was removed died a few days afterwards, and also a calf on the same premises. Every precaution was taken by the Police, and no human beings contracted the disease.

TABLE E.

District.	Scarlet Fever.	Diph- theria.	Enteric Fever.	Erysi- pelas.	Puer- peral Fever.	Total.
Downham District—						
Denver	2	1	..	..	..	3
Downham West ..	1	..	1	..	..	2
Fordham .. ..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Hilgay .. ..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Ryston	1	..	..	..	..	1
Southery .. ..	..	..	6	2	..	8
Ten Mile Bank ..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Welney .. ..	..	..	*2	..	..	2
Wiggenhall District—						
Holme .. ..	..	..	5	..	..	5
Magdalen	4	..	1	1	..	6
South Runcton ..	..	..	..	1	..	1
St. Germans .. ..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Stow Bardolph ..	..	..	1	3	..	4
Wallington	1	..	..	..	..	1
Watlington	1	..	..	..	..	1
Wimbotsham	2	..	..	1	..	3
Wormegay	1	..	..	..	..	1
Fincham District—						
Marham	3	..	..	..	..	3
Stoke Ferry	1	..	..	..	..	1
Totals	17	1	18	10	..	46

*Contracted outside the District.

TABLE F.

Month.	Scarlet Fever.	Diph- theria.	Enteric Fever.	Erysi- pelas.	Puer- peral Fever.	Total.
January ..	..	..	2	1	..	3
February ..	..	..	1	..	..	1
March ..	3	..	2	..	..	5
April ..	1	..	2	..	..	3
May ..	..	..	1	1	..	2
June ..	4	..	..	3	..	7
July ..	2	..	..	1	..	3
August ..	..	1	7	1	..	9
September ..	..	..	2	..	..	2
October ..	2	..	1	2	..	5
November ..	2	..	..	..	..	2
December ..	3	..	..	1	..	4
Totals ..	17	1	18	10	..	46

TABLE G.

Year.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Diph- theria.	Erysi- pelas.	Puer- peral Fever.	Total.
1896	49	7	28	13	1	98
1897	97	11	16	15	1	140
1898	9	4	34	10	1	58
1899	17	3	6	9	..	35
1900	19	11	1	6	..	37
1901	49	9	10	7	..	75
1902	75	7	36	4	..	122
1903	26	23	3	7	1	60
1904	45	2	1	7	..	55
1905	43	29	2	14	..	88
1906	129	14	8	9	1	161
1907	67	3	..	7	..	77
1908	87	3	3	3	1	97
1909	28	1	12	8	..	49
1910	20	5	2	12	..	39
1911	26	21	1	5	1	54
1912	5	15	2	8	1	31
1913	17	18	1	10	..	46

PREVALENCE & CONTROL OVER TUBERCULOSIS.

The work in connection with the Tuberculosis Regulations of 1912 has been somewhat arduous, and great care has been necessary to make all the investigations as private as possible.

All the cases notified have either been visited or enquiries made and information obtained from the Medical Attendant.

Where necessary offers of assistance in procuring Sanatorium treatment and other help has been given and subsequent visits made. In one case I found the house and children to be in a very neglected and dirty condition. The sufferer and family were, at my suggestion, removed to the Union Workhouse. The house was then thoroughly cleaned and put in a good state of repair.

- 3 cases received Sanatorium treatment.
- 3 „ went to Hospital for treatment.
- 2 „ received domiciliary treatment.
- 2 „ were sent to Union Workhouse.
- 6 „ have died.
- 3 „ have apparently recovered.
- 5 „ were under private treatment at home.

The following Tables show the classification and ages:—

Sex.	Pulmon- ary.	Osseous.	Abdominal	Glandular.	Under								Total.
					1	5	15	25	35	45	55	65	
Males	6	2	..	1	..	..	2	3	4	..	..	..	9
Females	12	1	2	..	..	..	6	2	2	4	1	..	15
Total	18	3	2	1	..	..	8	5	6	4	1	..	24

			Insured Persons.	Dependants of insured persons	Uninsured.	Total.
Pulmonary	..	..	6	4	9	19
Osseous	..	..	1	2	..	3
Abdominal	..	..	..	1	1	2
Glandular	..	..	1	1	..	2
Totals	..	..	8	8	10	26

VACCINATION.

The following table is taken from the Vaccination returns for the period January 1st, 1912 to June 30th, 1913:—

Sub-District.	No. of Births Registered.	Successful Vaccination	No. of Exemptions.	Died without being vaccinated	No. removed outside District.
Downham, including Urban District.	285	125	128	24	8
Wiggenhall	203	67	117	18	1
Fincham	122	50	61	7	4
Totals.	610	242	306	49	13

The number of exemptions from vaccination is gradually exceeding the number of vaccinations, and during 1913, irrespective of the date of birth, there were 159 successful vaccinations and 203 exemptions.

The figures for the past year show that considerably more than half the children born were unvaccinated at the end of the year. It is safe to estimate that at the present time there are considerably over 1,000 children under the age of seven years unprotected by vaccination.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The total number of deaths registered in the district was 181. To this number must be added 14 persons dying in the Union Workhouse and 15 persons dying elsewhere, but belonging to the district, making a total of 210, equal to an annual death rate of 13·4.

On analysing these figures it will be seen that 95 persons died over 65 years of age, and when these, together with the infantile deaths are deducted, it shows that between these ages only 76 deaths took place.

With the exception of Tuberculosis, which accounts for 14 deaths, and Cancer, which accounts for 11, there are no other causes which call for any particular comment. The deaths from Tuberculosis and Cancer are somewhat lower than in previous years.

The following Table will compare the annual deaths, births and infantile mortality rates in various parts of the Kingdom :—

TABLE H.

Year 1913.	Annual rate per 1000 living		Deaths under 1 year to 1000 Births.
	Births.	Deaths.	
England and Wales	23·9	13·4	109
95 Great Towns (including London	25·1	14·7	116
145 Smaller Towns	23·9	13·0	112
England and Wales (less the 241 Towns)	22·2	12·1	96
London	24·8	14·2	104
Downham Rural District .	22·9	13·4	108·6

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The infantile mortality is still high. The number of deaths in children below one year of age was 39, equal to a death rate of 108·6.

21 of this number died during the first month of life, and 19 of these died from somewhat indefinite causes, such as premature birth, debility, &c. Some of these may be due to such ante-natal causes as excessive or unsuitable employment during pregnancy, insanitary homes, poverty, intemperance, legitimacy and obstetrical difficulties, and to such post-natal causes as poverty, ignorance, neglect and improper feeding.

It is satisfactory to note that there were no deaths from diarrhoea or enteritis.

The total number of births registered in the district was 355, to which must be added four born in the Union Workhouse, making a total of 359, and giving a birth rate of 22·9.

There were 26 illegitimate children born, and four died under one year of age.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1913 and previous years.

Year	Population estimated to the middle of each year.	Births.			Total Deaths Registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.				
		Uncorrected Number.	Nett.						Under 1 year		At all ages.		
			Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.	of Non-residents registered in the District.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births.	Number.	Rate.	
1908	15000	..	358	23·8	211	14·06	..	11	48	131·2	222	14·8	
1909	15000	..	362	24·13	197	13·13	..	13	35	96·68	210	14·0	
1910	14500	..	360	24·8	177	12·20	..	6	33	91·38	183	12·62	
1911	15527	349	352	22·6	211	14·1	..	26	53	151·8	245	15·7	
1912	15550	353	357	22·9	211	13·6	3	22	38	106·4	231	14·8	
1913	15650	355	359	22·9	181	11·5		29	39	108·6	210	13·4	

Area of District in acres (land and inland water), 81,930. Total population at all ages, 14,527. Number of inhabited houses, 3,750. Average number of persons per house, 4·03.

TABLE 2.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1913.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	Number of Cases Notified.							Total cases notified in each locality.		
	At all ages.	At Ages - Years.						Downham	Wiggenhall.	Fincham
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards		
Small Pox .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup)	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas	10	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Typhus Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteric Fever	18	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Relapsing Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Continued Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Poliomyelitis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Forms of Tuberculosis	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals	70	..	4	25	15	21	3	2	27	8

Isolation Hospital—TENT.

TABLE 3.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the year 1913.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Nett deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring with- in or without the district.								
	All ages	Under 1 year.	1 and under 2	2 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 45.	45 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
All Causes—Certified.	210	39	2	1	5	10	18	37	95
Enteric Fever	3	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..
Small Pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Whooping Cough	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria and Croup ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Influenza	6	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	5
Erysipelas .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	12	..	..	..	..	1	6	5	..
Tuberculous Meningitis ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Other Tuberculous Diseases	2	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Cancer, malignant disease ..	18	..	..	..	..	..	2	9	7
Rheumatic Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Meningitis	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Organic Heart Disease ..	23	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	18
Bronchitis	12	2	3	..	1	..	..	2	4
Pneumonia (all forms) ..	14	5	1	1	..	1	1	1	4
Other diseases of Respira- tory Organs	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Diarrhœa and Enteritis ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Cirrhosis of Liver	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Alcoholism .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nephritis & Bright's Disease	6	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	4
Puerperal Fever .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other accidents and diseases of Pregnancy and Partu- rition	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Congenital Debility and Malformation, including Premature Birth ..	23	23	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide	6	..	..	..	2	..	1	1	2
Suicide	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Other Defined Diseases ..	75	5	1	..	2	4	3	9	51
Diseases ill-defined or un- known .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals ..	210	39	5	1	5	10	18	37	95

TABLE 4.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

1913.—Nett Deaths from stated causes at various Ages under One Year of Age.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Under 1 week.	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks	4 weeks and under 3 months	3 months and under 6 months	6 months and under 9 months	9 months and under 12 months	Total Deaths under 1 year.
All causes—Certified.	14	2	3	2	21	6	5	2	5	39
Small Pox
Chicken Pox
Measles	1	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever	1	1
Whooping Cough	1	1
Diphtheria and Croup
Erysipelas
Tuberculous Meningitis
Abdominal Tuberculosis
other Tuberculous Diseases	1	..	..	1
Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>)	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	1
Convulsions	1	2
Laryngitis	1	..	..	1	2
Bronchitis	1	1	2	1	5
Pneumonia (all forms)
Diarrhœa
Enteritis	1	..	..	1
Gastritis
Syphilis
Rickets
Suffocation (overlying)
Injury at Birth ..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Atelectasis
Congenital Malformations
Premature birth ..	6	..	..	..	6	1	..	..	..	7
Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	7	1	3	2	13	1	2	..	..	16
Other Causes	1	..	..	..	1
Totals	14	2	3	2	21	6	5	2	5	39

Nett Births in the year—Legitimate, 333 ; illegitimate, 26.

Nett Deaths in the year of—Legitimate infants, 35 ;
illegitimate infants, 4.

